

# The Loneliness Of Kwame Nkrumah

By J. KIRK SALE

**A**FTER two years they have now almost completed the wall around Flagstaff House, and once all the bars are in place and the gates installed the official headquarters of the President of Ghana will be a fortified 200-acre island in the middle of Accra. Behind three separate gates manned by armed guards Kwame Nkrumah will be able to look out over a private enclave that includes a battery of offices, an army camp, a military hospital, a radio station and his own personal zoo.

Flagstaff House tells much about the incredibly complex and indelibly fascinating personality of Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana's unquestioned

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leader for the last 15 years and one of Africa's most important figures. It reflects most obviously the single-minded concern for security of a man who has every reason to be afraid, since the political opposition he has driven underground has burst to the surface in two assassination attempts in the last three years. He seldom leaves the Flagstaff fortress, and then either without any warning or with hundreds of police and soldiers guarding his routes. On a trip last year to the port city of Tema, 20 miles away, the route through the capital was lined by guards stationed 50 feet apart and the open highway cluttered with armored cars and police cruisers.

Nkrumah's home is almost as well-guarded as his office, though he usually spends less time there. It is in a remodeled 17th-century castle on

an isolated promontory overlooking the Gulf of Guinea, and to the earlier fortifications a high protecting wall has been added in recent years. Last year, after an assassination attempt within Flagstaff itself, Nkrumah burrowed himself there and made it virtually unapproachable, with a dozen policemen guarding the entrance road, two small tanks lined up against the wall and a gunboat of the Ghana Navy cruising in the harbor.

I once drove up as far as the front gate while taking a visiting American on a sightseeing tour of the city, but at the wall a rifle-wielding soldier roughly turned us back and told us sternly that it was forbidden even to look at the castle. A group of Western newsmen who did manage to fast-talk their way past the main gate so upset Nkrumah that he

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